

Optimism - Perhaps over-optimism of year ago on detente gone -  
instead -

Mid East War, Energy Crisis, set back in U.S. Economy.

Skepticism - questioning how all going so well with old  
opponent - so many problems at home

Let us talk a bit about Detente

Can T. 3/8/74  
Has original with  
OO's notes on it.  
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DETENTE

*B. J. G. H.*  
- Over-optimism: expected too much too fast

Washington correspondent - (advance warning of Arab attack)

- Why over-optimistic?

Looked at detente only from our point of view - American  
point of view.

Assumed Soviet view was same

- U.S. viewpoint - 2 reasons for detente:

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First, Rational thing to do

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(1) tension plus

vast stocks nuclear weapons on both sides - equals Dangerous situation. Risk of a mis-step tends to increase as tension increases - (Hair-trigger)

(2) No unfulfilled needs or ambitions that require competition with Soviets.

Perfectly happy to forego/not take advantage

(3) Do not fear USSR, despite Cold War years. Therefore willing to take calculated risk.

Partly because: superior militarily and economically all those years.

Partly because: never attacked/invaded at home. No tradition of having to fight on own soil.

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Second reason - revulsion to Vietnam

- pushed emotionally into detente
- opportunity to avoid war - to step farther back from the threshold of war.
- alternate uses of \$

Did same conditions exist in Soviet Union?

Emotional? No - public opinion not allowed to give emotional thrust to policy.

Rational? - Reasons - same as ours?

1. Same concern over nuclear stockpiles and hair-trigger.

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2. Soviet homeland invaded repeatedly. Wary of entrusting future to another's goodwill or intentions.

3. Soviets clearly have external ambitions.

- in part from ideological belief that until capitalism suppressed everywhere, it will be aggressive. Threat to Communist Philosophy.
- in part have external ambitions. Haven't been global power we have in past 30 years; feel the need to compete, to prove the worth of their system. Only possible if influence is Global.
- We humiliated them - from their point of view in Lebanon-58.  
Cuba & Berlin-62 - Real confrontation they lost.  
N.Vietnam-72 - Mining Haiphong. Another loss of face before their Allies.

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Evidence of their move toward global power status - as emerge from being traditionally a continental power, increased ability to project maritime power around globe - not just across land frontiers. The Soviets are well aware that every world power of recent history has projected that power from a maritime base. If Soviet objective quite different from ours, why did they accept to participate in Detente?

1. We wanted to play that game. After all militarily there are only 2 super powers - The Soviets must do the power waltz with us.
2. Opened possibilities for solving some domestic problems - anxious for trade and technology.
3. At the same time economically and politically the world has been evolving toward multi-polarity.

Thus, detente opened up some tactical opportunities for the Soviets - through easing pressure on one front while dealing with China on other. Musn't forget serious USSR - PRC differences - (Easy to forget we are not USSR's only problem.)

- Long common border - highly disputed in places.
- Ideological differences and competition for world communist leadership (especially third world/emerging nations.)
- USSR control of Manchuria (considered a part of China by the PRC.

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Therefore, Detente means something different to each of us

Without casting accusations of distingenuousness/malevolence/false intent.

- Simply had different reasons. Not necessarily incompatible with ours.

Could work to both our advantages; Basically it means shifting competition to non-military arenas.

- must expect continued competition with USSR.
- must expect Soviets to look for weaknesses and capitalize on them. often means rushing in or overreacting when situations appear.
- Did in Mid East when going well for Egypt.
- Did in grain deal - not understand our reaction.
- Did on suppression of dissent (Solzhenitsyn)

Analogy to faithfulness to wife - easy when no opportunity.

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We must not provide Soviets opportunities.

In part means continued diplomatic efforts.

In part that means remaining militarily strong. Often difficult to understand need for strong military in peacetime. Yet military serves diplomatic function in peacetime. It provides leverage in world affairs and demands careful consideration of consequences of actions on ~~part of~~ possible adversaries.

- One facet of that strength particularly important - deterrent impact comes from:
  1. Possession of military strength.
  2. World awareness of that strength and
  3. our demonstrated will to use it where we believe vital U.S. interests are at stake

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- Do not want to fracture detente by having to restrain Soviets militarily. Want to eliminate any temptation.
- Make clear we have power and the will to use it.

But, - just as firing a ballistic missile from a sub in anger would signal that weapons system's failure to serve as an effective deterrent, so would our use of any military force against the Soviets. But, in both cases it is the military reality of the missile and sub and the forces in being, which deters. Without them, the USSR is unrestrained from any adventure for any reason.

Special emphasis on Naval Forces - best suited to go anywhere in world and demonstrate our interests and capabilities to support those interests. A ship at sea off a country violates no one's sovereignty, but clearly shows U.S. interest. ~~All part of deterrence.~~

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Basically must recognize

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1. Detente not a love affair.
2. At best, means a few differences settled.

Don't know:

1. Where USSR will press for advantage next.
2. How far USSR believes she can go without straining relationship.  
But must be ready for that test.

Deterrent impact of military force - more difficult to understand than its warfighting potential. Not only for civilians but also for military.

- Warfighting -

Hardware

Tactics                      Basics of our trade

Morale

- Deterrence -

Psychological  
Perceptions  
"Mind-reading"

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Clearly there is a danger of mis-reading each others minds.

Seems apparent Mr. Brezhnev today is worried that his hoped for

benefits of detente are not coming to pass. There have been set backs on the most-favored nation issue and in loans for trade.

Then, too, there is the new defense budget which may appear to be

larger than the last. These and other factors seem to have pushed

Brezhnev into speaking with a harder line - apparently moving him to a less exposed position in case detente collapses. But, detente only works from a position of power equality. With USSR continuing to build military forces at accelerated rate, the threat of nuclear confrontation is real, not the time for us to dismantle our military - or permit it to weaken through obsolescence. What deters whom? How much?

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- Easy to enough off important decisions (financing new equipment)

until too late.

CVX takes 6 years from drawing board to reality.

CVNX takes 9 years from drawing board to reality.

Assessments made today influence military posture 10 years from now.

Important that international trends be explored, discussed - But, within framework of pragmatism not idealization.

Your help is needed. National objectives must be clear and military role understood if it is to accurately support our Foreign Policy. Admittedly, though, there is a danger of pushing military force building too hard and rupturing detente, but there is an equal danger of underestimating what it takes for deterrence or for war fighting if deterrence fails.